

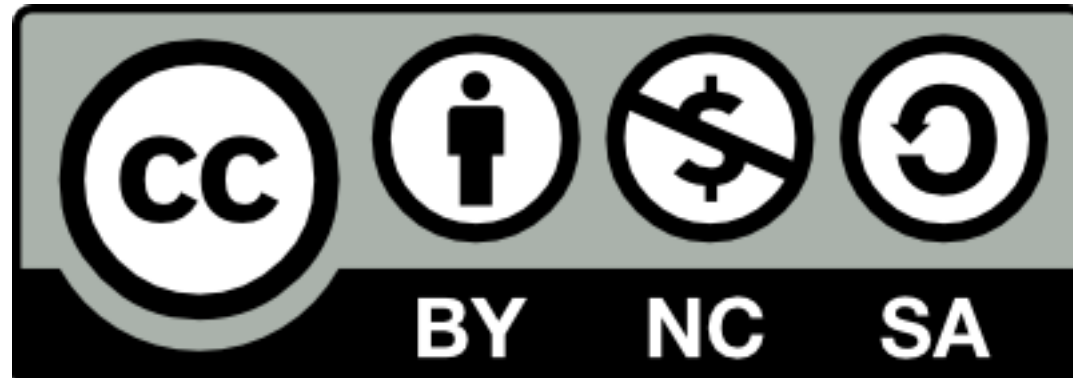
Lessons from {distributed,remote,virtual} communities and companies

Colin Charles, Chief Evangelist, Percona Inc.
colin.charles@percona.com / byte@bytebot.net
<http://bytebot.net/blog/> | @bytebot on Twitter
FOSSASIA Singapore
18 March 2017

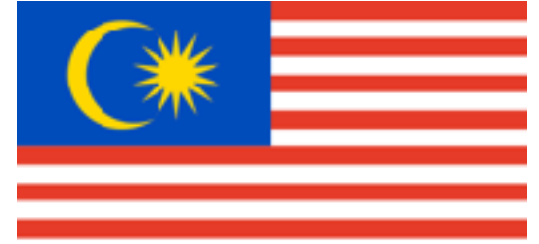


License

- Creative Commons BY-NC-SA 4.0
- <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/legalcode>



whoami



- Chief Evangelist (in the CTO office), Percona Inc
 - Focusing on the MySQL ecosystem (MySQL, Percona Server for MySQL, MariaDB Server), as well as the MongoDB ecosystem (Percona Server for MongoDB) + **100% open source** tools from Percona like Percona Monitoring & Management, Percona xtrabackup, Percona Toolkit, etc.
- Founding team of MariaDB Server (2009-2016), previously at Monty Program Ab, merged with SkySQL Ab, now MariaDB Corporation
- Formerly MySQL AB (exit: Sun Microsystems)
- Past lives include Fedora Project (FESCO), OpenOffice.org
- MySQL Community Contributor of the Year Award winner 2014

Open Source Communities Get It

- Find a piece of software
- Download it, read its documentation, compile it, get to using it
- Join the mailing list
- Join the IRC channel
- Use the software, find an *itch*, *scratch* that itch, and you've got your first feature diff to contribute
- File a bug, extend some documentation
- Evangelise the product to your friends

Architecture of Participation

Describes the nature of systems that are designed for user contribution

Did anyone care about...

- Timezones?
- Weekends?
- Travelling to an office?
- Calling someone to get things done?
- Meetings?
 - “Every minute you avoid spending in a meeting is a minute you can get real work done instead.” - Jason Fried, Rework

Have a clearly stated goal of what your community/company should achieve

Distributed Workforce

- Establish early
- Great for:
 - development (engineering teams)
 - consulting, training, support
 - sales
- Bit more challenging for:
 - finance & admin, human resources, management

Social aspects

- Culture
- Trust
- Cultural backgrounds
 - Native languages, home countries
- Self-motivated
- Leadership + collaborative work ethic
- Communication skills
 - The English language as lingua franca, say no to colloquialisms, say no to being passive aggressive
- Work life balance



Remote has advantages

- Hire great talent everywhere
- Work from anywhere
- Set your own work schedule (core hours)
- Timezones can “follow the sun” (great for support organisations)
- HBR, Forbes: 50% less likely to quit, 87% more engaged than peers, 1.9x likely to say they love their jobs

Communications

- Git (and Github)
- Slack
 - water cooler, stand up's, *ChatOps*, discuss support tickets, etc.
- Email
- Jira
- Confluence/Google Sites
- Google Drive
- Skype/Google Hangouts

Face to Face

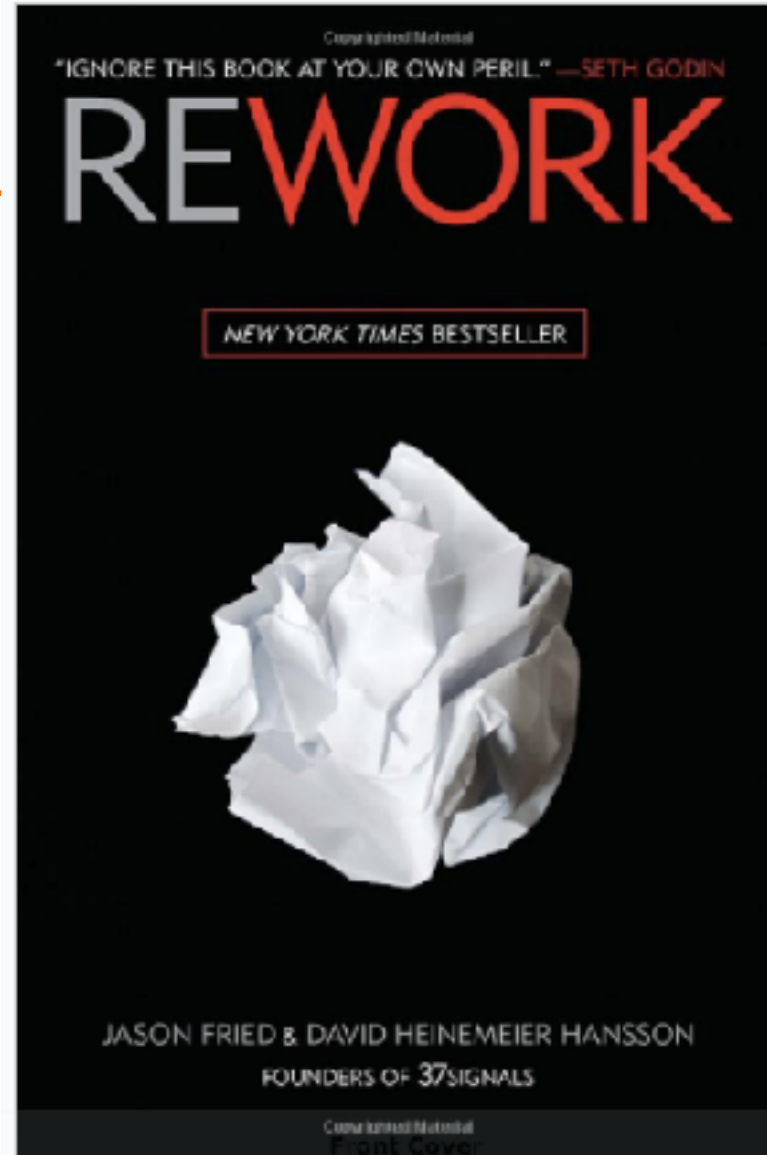
- Company and team meetings
- Monthly all-hands calls (including reporting)
- Weekly CEO calls
- Google Hangouts for team meetings (the power of the face!)

Some tips to success

- Benefits policy - harmonise it (yes, including vacations!)
- Remind everyone about **asynchronous communication**
- Document heavily
- Make clear company culture in documentation
 - values, history, constant evolution
- Process must be clear: who are decision makers? Conflict resolution?
- Make sure there isn't an advantage of being in the office; and no disadvantage of being remote - DHH, Remote

Resources

Paul Graham - Mean People Fail



Thank you!

Colin Charles

colin.charles@percona.com / byte@bytebot.net

<http://bytebot.net/blog> | [@bytebot](#) on twitter

slides: slideshare.net/bytebot